

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A toner for electrostatic latent image development comprising:

coloring particles containing at least a binding resin,  
a colorant and a release agent; and  
an external additive,

wherein a variation in a number average particle diameter of the coloring particles is 25 or less, an average circularity of the coloring particles is 0.975 or more, and a variation in a circularity of the coloring particles is 2.5 or less.

2. A toner for electrostatic latent image development according to claim 1, wherein as the external additive, at least monodisperse spherical particle having a true specific gravity in a range of 1.0 to 1.9 are used, and a ratio of a number average particle diameter  $D_{TN}$  of the coloring particles and a number average particle diameter  $D_{add}$  of the monodisperse spherical particles ( $D_{TN}/D_{add}$ ) is in a range of  $25 \leq D_{TN}/D_{add} \leq 80$ .

3. A toner for electrostatic latent image development according to claim 1, wherein the toner is prepared by a chemical process.

4. A toner for electrostatic latent image development

according to claim 3, wherein the chemical process is an emulsion polymerization method comprising:

mixing a resin minute particle dispersion, a colorant dispersion and a release agent dispersion, and aggregating the resin minute particles, the colorant particles and the release agent particles to form aggregated particles; and

heating the aggregated particles to a temperature not lower than a glass transition temperature of the resin minute particles to fuse and coalesce the particles.

5. A toner for electrostatic latent image development according to claim 2, wherein the external additive is monodisperse spherical silica.

6. A toner for electrostatic latent image development according to claim 2, wherein the external additive is monodisperse spherical organic resin minute particles, and a gel fraction of the monodisperse spherical organic resin minute particles is 70% by mass or more.

7. A toner for electrostatic latent image development according to claim 2, wherein a number average particle diameter  $D_{TN}$  of the coloring particles is in a range of 5.0 to 7.0  $\mu\text{m}$ .

8. A toner for electrostatic latent image development

according to claim 2, wherein a standard deviation for an average particle diameter of the monodisperse spherical particles is the number average particle diameter  $D_{add} \times 0.22$  or less.

9. A toner for electrostatic latent image development according to claim 5, wherein the monodisperse spherical silica is prepared by a sol-gel process.

10. A toner for electrostatic latent image development according to claim 5, wherein the monodisperse spherical silica is hydrophobicization-treated.

11. A toner for electrostatic latent image development according to claim 6, wherein a refractive index of the monodisperse spherical organic resin minute particles is in a range of 1.4 to 1.6.

12. A process for preparing a toner for electrostatic latent image development, which comprises:

mixing a resin minute particle dispersion, a colorant dispersion and a release agent dispersion, and aggregating the resin minute particles, the colorant particles and the release agent particles to form aggregated particles; and

heating the aggregated particles to a temperature not

lower than a glass transition temperature of the resin minute particles to fuse and coalesce the particles.

13. A process for preparing a toner for electrostatic latent image development according to claim 12, which further comprises adding and mixing another minute particle dispersion to adhere the minute particles to surfaces of the aggregated particles, before the aggregated particles are fused and coalesced.

14. A process for preparing a toner for electrostatic latent image development according to claim 12, wherein a temperature for fusing and coalescing the aggregated particles is in a range of 70 to 120°C.

15. A process for preparing a toner for electrostatic latent image development according to claim 12, wherein an average particle diameter of the resin minute particles is 1  $\mu\text{m}$  or less.

16. A process for preparing a toner for electrostatic latent image development according to claim 12, wherein an average particle diameter of the release agent particles is 1  $\mu\text{m}$  or less.

17. A process for preparing a toner for electrostatic latent image development according to claim 12, wherein an average particle diameter of the colorant particles is 0.8  $\mu\text{m}$  or less.

18. An electrostatic latent image developer comprising a toner for electrostatic latent image development and a carrier, the toner for electrostatic latent image development comprising:

coloring particles containing at least a binding resin, a colorant and a release agent; and

an external additive,

wherein a variation in a number average particle diameter of the coloring particles is 25 or less, an average circularity of the coloring particles is 0.975 or more, and a variation in a circularity of the coloring particles is 2.5 or less.

19. An electrostatic latent image developer according to claim 18, wherein a volume resistivity of the carrier is in a range of  $10^6$  to  $10^{14}$   $\Omega\cdot\text{cm}$ .

20. An image forming method comprising a charging step of charging a surface of an electrostatic latent image supporting member, an electrostatic latent image forming step of forming an electrostatic latent image on the surface of the

electrostatic latent image supporting member, a developing step of developing the electrostatic latent image using an electrostatic latent image developer to form a toner image, a transferring step of transferring the toner image formed on the surface of the electrostatic latent image supporting member onto a surface of a transfer receiving material, and a cleaning step of removing toner remaining on the surface of the electrostatic latent image supporting member,

wherein: the cleaning step is a step of removing remaining toner using an electrostatic brush; the electrostatic latent image developer comprises a toner for electrostatic latent image development and a carrier; the toner for electrostatic latent image development has coloring particles containing at least a binding resin, a colorant and a release agent, and an external additive; a variation in a number average particle diameter of the coloring particles is 25 or less; an average circularity of the coloring particles is 0.975 or more; and a variation in a circularity of the coloring particles is 2.5 or less.